

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A client administration method of administering a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the method comprising:

- accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information on a client by client basis;
- storing a watcher list for each of clients in the clients group, the watcher list correlating at least one identifier of a watcher client with an identifier of a client owning the watcher list, each watcher client being provided with the presence information of a client owning the watcher list;
- accepting a change of an identifier of the first client;
- selecting a part of watcher clients of the first client as one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client;
- replacing, in a watcher list of the first client, an old identifier of the first client with a new identifier, and replacing identifiers of all watcher clients with one or more identifiers of the selected identifier notification recipients, and
- transmitting a new identifier of the first client to one or more selected identifier notification recipients.

2. (CANCELLED)

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

- storing identifiers of subscriber clients so that each subscriber client is associated with at least one client that provides the presence information thereto, the subscriber client being provided with the presence information of at least one client of the clients group; and
- extracting a client to be an identifier notification recipient, the client being both a watcher client of the first client and a subscriber client of the first client.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

notifying the first client's watcher client of new presence information according to the setting of the presence information;

storing a notification history of the presence information; and

said selecting including extracting at least one of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client based on the notification history, and deciding to be one or more identifier notification recipients.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

administering distribution of text messages exchanged between the clients;

storing a distribution history of distributed text messages; and

said selecting including extracting at least one of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client based on the distribution history, and deciding to be one or more identifier notification recipients.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client monitor method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

said storing of the presence information of the clients includes associating the presence information with an access level, the access level limiting notification recipients of the presence information of the clients;

the access level of each watcher client is stored; and

a portion of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client is determined to be the identifier notification recipients based on the access level of each watcher client.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, comprising:

transmitting display data for displaying the change of the identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, comprising:

transmitting attribute information related to the change of the identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client administration method as set forth in claim 8, comprising:

accepting registration of the attribute information.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A client administration device that administers a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the device comprising:

a presence-storing unit accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information on a client by client basis;

a notification recipient-storing unit storing a watcher list for each of clients in the clients group, the watcher list correlating at least one identifier of a watcher client with an identifier of a client owning the watcher list, each watcher client being provided with the presence information of a client owning the watcher list;

an identifier-changing unit accepting a change of the identifier of the first client;

a decision unit selecting a part of watcher clients of the first client as one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client, and

where an old identifier of the first client is replaced with a new identifier in a watcher list of the first client, and identifiers of all watcher clients are replaced with one or more identifiers of the selected identifier notification recipients, and

a new identifier of the first client is transmitted to one or more selected identifier notification recipients identified by said decision unit.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A computer-readable storage medium storing a client administration program for administering a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the program controlling a computer system, when executed, to perform a method comprising:

accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information on a client by client basis;

storing a watcher list for each of clients in the clients group, the watcher list correlating at least one identifier of a watcher client with an identifier of a client owning the watcher list, each watcher client being provided with the presence information of a client owning the watcher list;

accepting a change of the identifier of the first client;
selected a part of watcher clients of the first client as one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client;
replacing, in a watcher list of the first client, an old identifier of the first client with a new identifier, and replacing identifiers of all watcher clients with one or more identifiers of the selected identifier notification recipients, and
transmitting a new identifier of the first client to one or more selected identifier notification recipients.

12. (CANCELLED)

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A client administration method of administering a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the method comprising:
accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information on a client by client basis;
storing client-relationship information and a watcher list for each of clients in the clients group, the watcher list correlating at least one identifier of a watcher client with an identifier of a client owning the watcher list, each watcher client being provided with the presence information of a client owning the watcher list;
accepting a change of an identifier of the first client;
selecting a part of information of watcher clients of the first client as one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client;
replacing, in a watcher list of the first client, an old identifier of the first client with a new identifier, and replacing identifiers of all watcher clients with one or more identifiers of the selected identifier notification recipients, and
transmitting a new identifier of the first client to one or more selected identifier notification recipients identified.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An instant messaging administration method, comprising:
storing a list of user identifiers used by a client, presence information of the client and for each of the user identifiers, a list of accepted identifiers corresponding to other clients that are trusted by the client and are associated with at least one of the user identifiers;

selecting information among the other clients as one or more notification recipients for a selected user identifier of the client;

transmitting the selected user identifier to the one or more identifier notification recipient;

accepting a request for a change notification of presence information of the selected user identifier from the one or more identifier notification recipients;

replacing, in a watcher list of the selected client, an old identifier of the selected client with a new identifier, and replacing identifiers of all watcher clients with one or more identifiers of the selected identifier notification recipients, and

storing a correlation of the selected user identifier and the accepted identifier of each of the one or more identifier notification recipients.